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HEBREW AND RABBINICAL WORDS IN PRESENT USE.

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We shall give a few of the most common Hebrew and Rabbinical words with some of their meanings in present colloquial use among the English-German speaking Jews.* The words are arranged alphabetically for the sake of convenience, but they readily fall into three classes: (1) Good Hebrew (biblical) or Rabbinical (Chaldaic and late Hebrew) words with their proper meanings. (2) Good Hebrew or Rabbinical words with new meanings. (3) Barbarisms. The following deviations in pronunciation as taught in the grammars must be noted. Qāmēç (קָמֵחַ) when accented is pronounced as *o* in *rose*; when unaccented as *ë* or *ï*. The tendency is to give all long unaccented vowels the short *e* sound. ק and ר are pronounced as *d*; ו as *v*; ט as *s*, ת as *t*. Whenever the colloquial meaning differs from the Hebrew or Rabbinical one, the latter is put into brackets.

אפיקורוס (Rab.). The Greek word Epicurus. It means one who does not care for religion. In the Rabbinical writings, it designates a man that has no regard either for the law or for tradition.

בהמה (Heb. *beast*). A stupid person.

בעל דרשון (Heb. בעל ruler, possessor. Rab. דרשון preacher). Preacher.

גוי (Heb. *nation*). It may mean any *individual* that is not a Jew, also a Jew that adopts Gentile customs.

גנב (Heb.). A thief.

דאגה (Heb. *anxiety*). Concern. "It is no דאגה (concern) of mine."

חברותא (Chald. *a company*). A crowd.

חדוש (Rab. *anything new*). News.

חזן (Rab. *the overseer of a synagogue*). The reader who leads in public worship, not necessarily a rabbi.

חכם (Heb.). A wise man, also ironically a pretender to wisdom.

חפה (Heb. *bridal bed*). The canopy under which the marriage ceremony is performed.

חמץ (Heb. *that which is leavened*). Anything to be eaten during the Passover. To this word, as well as to some others, the syllable דיק is added, mean-

* For words in use among German speaking Jews, see *Die Gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden* von Dr. Zunz. Berlin: 1832, pp. 438-442.

ing like **חֲמִיץ-דִּיִּק** of the nature of or like **חֲמִיץ**. This **דִּיִּק** is the German word Ding (thing). It is also written **דִּיִּג**, e. g., **חֲזִן-דִּיִּג**, e. g., *.

חַס וְשָׁלוֹם. A Rabbinical expression meaning *mercy and peace*, but more especially *God forbid*.

חָתָן (Heb.). Bridegroom.

חֲתָנָה (Heb.). Wedding.

טָרֵפָה (Heb. **טָרַף** to rend). All food that is ritually unclean. This meaning is also found in later Rabbinical writings.

כְּבוֹד (Heb.). Honor or praise.

כֵּלָה (Heb.). Bride.

כֶּשֶׁר (Heb. to be right). Food that is ritually clean. In Rabbinical writings the *Höph'al* means whatever is allowed. This word has become Anglicized, e. g., *Kosher* meat; the meat of animals killed and dressed according to the law. *Kosher* designates also a pious person, from Chald. **כֶּשֶׁר**, to be pious.

לִוְחַ (Heb. tablet). Almanac.

מֹהֵל (Chald. **מְהוּלָא**). The one who performs the rite of circumcision.

מִזַּל (Rab. one's lucky star). Luck. Also **מִזַּל-טוֹב**, good luck. The German word *schlimm* (bad) is also used, e. g., *Schlimm מִזַּל*, bad luck. This word is at times used with **בְּרָכָה** blessing, e. g., "In this house there is neither **מִזַּל** nor **בְּרָכָה**, neither luck nor blessing."

מַחֲלָה (Rab. **מָחַל** to release a debtor from payment). Failure in business.

מַמְזִיר (Heb.). Bastard.

מַצִּיָּאָה (Rab. anything found). A bargain in purchasing.

מִצְוָה (Heb.). A biblical command. Colloquially, any noble act of kindness may be so called.

מִשְׁוֵמֵר (Chald. **שְׁמַר** to force one to apostatize; Ithpaël, to apostatize). Apostate.

מִשְׁפָּחָה (Heb.). A family.

נִפְקָא (Chald.). Prostitute. **נִפְקָן** (Chald.) means to go out.

סִנְדֵּק (Rab. **סִנְדִּיקוּס**). Godfather. The one holding the child during circumcision.

עַם הָאָרֶץ (Rab.). One who is unlearned. The plural is formed by adding the termination to the last word, as if it were a compound word **עַם הָאָרְצִים**.

פֶּסַח (Heb.). Passover. **פֶּסַח-דִּיִּק** means anything that may be eaten during the Passover.

פְּרָם (Rab. one having control). President of a congregation. President of the Board of Trustees.

קָהָל and **קְהָלָה** (Heb.). A congregation.

רוּחַ (Chald. **רִוּחַ**, Aphel, to increase one's gain). Profit.

* Zunz, p. 439.

שַׁבָּת (Heb.). Sabbath.

שׁוֹטֵה (Rab.). A fool.

שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם (Heb. *peace upon you*). Colloquially this means, *How do you do*, and may be used when but *one* person is addressed.

שָׂמֵשׁ (Rab. *servant*). The janitor of a synagogue. The word is commonly pronounced Šames, not Šameš.

שְׂקִיצָה (Heb. שִׁקְץ *abomination*). A Gentile servant girl. שִׁקְץ is one who is not a Jew, or a Jew that adopts Gentile customs. There is an expression used very often, meaning *for spite*. It is pronounced as if written לְהַכְלִים. There is no such Hebrew or Rabbinical word כְּלִים. It may be a corruption of the Hebrew word כַּעַס *vexation*.

A very curious word is בִּיצְמֶר, meaning an *Irishman*. The word may be explained as follows. בִּיצָה (plural בִּיצִים) means *egg*, in German *Ei*. The word has been formed by suggestion of sound. *I*, the first syllable of the word *Irishman*, suggested the German word *Ei*, which suggested the Hebrew word meaning *Ei* or *egg*. The termination ר- is the German *er*, affixed to names of countries to denote an inhabitant thereof.